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SOURCE Soviet newspapers as indicated.

1949 NAVIGATION BEGINS
ON ASIATIC USSR RIVERS

ICE FLOW STARTS ON OB' AND TOM' -- Sovetskaya Sibir', No 76, 19 Apr 49

The recent warm weather, which has melted almost all the snow on the fields, has increased the water level of the Ob' River, and has started the ice flow in the river. The increase in the water level in a 24-hour period reached 29 centimeters at Barnaul, 55 at Kamen', 109 at Novosibirsk, and 98 at Molchanovo. The river has been freed of ice from its source to barnaul. The flow started on 18 April at Kamen'. In the vicinity of Novosibirsk, the Ob' is free of ice in the section between the railroad bridges. Ice flow has started on the entire length of the Tom' River. The increase in the water level during the last 24 hours reached 190 centimeters.

OR: RIVER NAVIGATION STARTS -- Sovetskaya Sibir', No 81, 26 Apr 49

The navigation season has begun on the upper part of the Ob' River. Freight transport will be substantially increased this year and river workers will attempt to reach the 1950 level. In 1948, only two of the 18 Ob' River ships which had pledged to operate according to the example set by the Volga steamer Ruslan, fulfilled their pledge. The unproductive idle period of ships in loading and unloading, refueling, etc., was the chief cause for the transport lag on the Ob'.

In 1948, the fleet also failed to load ships to full capacity, with the result that transport costs were increased. Last year's income from transport on the Ob' was considerably less than estimated because of losses arising from improper storage and handling of freight and failure to meet schedules. The 1948 plan for passenger transport on the Ob' was also not completed. Steamers were often delayed and failed to operate on strict schedules. The passenger station at Novosibirsk port has not yet been readied for the current navigation season and suburban docks are in poor condition. Repair of the Tomsk station has not been completed.

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WEST SIBERIAN LINE ANNOUNCES SCHEDULE -- Sovetskaya Sibir', No 78,
22 Apr 49

The West Siberian Steamship Line announces to all Novosibirsk city and oblast inhabitants that regular freight and passenger steamship service on the following lines will begin with the start of the navigation season: Novosibirsk-Barnaul-Biysk, Novosibirsk-Barnaul, Novosibirsk-Kamen', Novosibirsk-Tomsk-Aleksandrovo, Novosibirsk-Tomsk-Kargasok, Novosibirsk-Nizhne-Vartovskoye, Tomsk-Kolpashevo, and Tomsk-Tegul'dat (along the Chulym River).

Local suburban lines will be organized in Biysk, Barnaul, Novosibirsk, Tomsk, and Kolpashevo. Steamships will run on schedules. Ships and docks have been equipped with radio facilities.

NOVOSIBIRSK SMALL RIVER FLEET EXPANDS -- Sovetskaya Sibir', No 73, 15 Apr 49

The total tonnage of cargo ships on the small rivers of Novosibirsk Oblast has increased almost 100 percent over 1948. The capacity of the automotive fleet has increased more than 150 percent. The Oblast Administration of the Utilization of Small Rivers for Transport has planned to transport from Severnyy and Kyshtovskiy Rayons 12 1/2 times more grain than in 1948. New boats for the fleet have been built in enterprises of the administration and in the Oblast Wood-Pulp Chemistry Union.

AMUR LINE IMPROVES FACILITIES -- Tikhookeanskaya Zvezda, No 76, 1 Apr 49

The Amur River Steamship Line and its affiliates -- the rayon administration, the exploitation section and the intermediate docks on the Middle and Lower Amur -- have concluded with their clients the 1949 contracts which provide for a substantial increase in transport of mineral and construction materials, equipment, and timber.

The river port of Khabarovsk, which is the main transshipment base of the steamship line, completed its preparations for the new season considerably ahead of the schedule. Coal conveyors in the "Vetka" (siding) section have been modernized. A ship can now load coal almost twice as fast as in 1948. Railroad coal trains will be unloaded by scraper conveyors. Handling of passenger ships, particularly Diesel ships of the express lines, will also be speeded by simultaneous unloading and loading of the two holds. This year, a considerable number of the fleet's ships will operate on increased speeds.

Repair of the port's dock fleet is lagging behind the general speed-up on the steamship line. The dock fleet is necessary for the efficient handling of passengers and freight, hauling barges to docks for loading purposes, and transfer of passengers from Troitsk, Yelabuga, Krasnaya Rechka, and Polrovka. The fleet will also transport freight for construction projects in the city.

Tikhookeanskaya Zvezda, No 101, 30 Apr 49

The Amur River Steamship Line was awarded the All-Union second prize in the first-quarter competition among USSR steamship lines. The line was awarded the Red Banner of the VTAOPS and the Ministry of the River Fleet and 175,000 rubles.

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BIRA RIVER NAVIGATION STARTS -- Tikhookeanskaya Zvezda, No 101, 30 Apr 49

Navigation has begun on the Bira River. The first trip from the village of Zheltyy Yar, Khabarovsk Kray, was made by the cutter Pioneer which carried seed for kolkhozes.

LENA RIVER CLEARED OF ICE -- Vechernyaya Moskva, No 115, 16 May 49

The Lena River has been cleared of ice from its source to the mouth of the Vitim River. Regular navigation of freight and passenger steamers has begun on the Kachuga-Kirensk line.

COMBINATION AIR-WATER TRAVEL TO BE INITIATED -- Pravda Vostoka, No 94, 14 May 49

By order of the Ministry of River Fleet and Main Administration of Civil Air Fleet, combination air-water travel will be initiated on the rivers and air routes of the USSR beginning 15 May. The combination air-water travel will permit purchase of airplane tickets at agencies of the river fleet and the purchase of tickets for river travel from agencies of the Civil Air Fleet.

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